

# THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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## Chapter III

AS it grew dark they sat in their open window and listened to that music. The longer they listened, the more certain they felt that the player was the young violinist of whom they had lately read in the newspapers.

"Don't you remember that his mother called him Leigh when we first heard them talking?" whispered Jean. "And the papers said the Norwells were off for a summer cruise in their houseboat. I read it somewhere a day or two ago."

"He has been studying in Italy — the paper said that, too," added Kathleen. "But he has come back to finish his education in some American school. He is only sixteen, you know."

"This is the fellow sure enough," exclaimed Blake under his breath. "We're in luck — never mind if we can't afford to buy tickets for the school concert."

"Do you suppose Ella Glidden and Harvey know he is here?" asked Kathleen after a while.

"I don't think so. If they did that girl would be visiting the houseboat and looking into every cupboard on board," muttered Blake. "I don't believe the Norwells want to be visited. Most likely they're cruising about just for a rest and they thought this was a quiet place to lie by, in here behind all these old buildings. You can't see a sign of them from the street. They could stay here quite a while without being noticed."

They found afterwards that Blake was right in thinking that the Gliddens knew nothing of the whereabouts of the *Sandpiper*. Ella and her committee had made that engagement by letter before the Norwells started on their cruise.

The houseboat was gone next

## The Secret Window

By Mabel S. Merrill

afford an instrument, whistling was the next best thing.

One day to their delight there was the *Sandpiper* again! She had stolen in to her moorings under their window and was swung so close to the steep bank that they could look right down on her deck.

morning, and in the hurry of those few days before the concert the Wynns almost forgot about her. Only they would remind each other now and then that they had heard Leigh Norwell play ever so many pieces right under their window. Blake would begin whistling one of the beautiful airs they had listened to, and in a minute Kathleen and Jean would chime in till it sounded like a roomful of birds. The Wynns had a great love of music, and since they could never

"If we should go down and walk along that little path on the bank we could see her even nearer," suggested Kathleen wistfully. "Don't you think it would be all right, Blake?"

"Right enough, only Jean would like to go too and she isn't home from school yet. But then, we can go again, and take her with us. I'm thinking the *Sandpiper* likes this hiding-place in behind these buildings. Shouldn't wonder if they mean to stay here till after the concert."

From the secret window they could step out on to a small wooden landing from which a flight of stairs went down to the water. In the days when the old building was used for a warehouse they had brought up crates and boxes that way when the boats came in. Blake and Kathleen ran down the stairs and almost stumbled over a tall boy who was sitting on the lowest step. As he jumped up and faced them, they saw that it was Leigh Norwell himself.

"Hello," he exclaimed. "Beg pardon for being underfoot. I didn't expect anybody to come down these stairs. They look as if they hadn't been used for years."

"They haven't," laughed Kathleen, "until we found the secret window the other day and got it open."

"A secret window?" repeated Leigh, looking much interested. "Well, I was thinking as I studied this old building that it must have a history. Was it used by



—“and Jean, very bright-eyed and wondering, flung open the door.”



pirates in the days of Captain Kidd?"

They laughed and explained that it was nothing so exciting as that, but he still seemed so interested that they invited him to go up and look at the window.

"What a jolly room!" he exclaimed as he peered over the sill. "Is this where you live?"

Blake nodded and hesitated only a moment before he asked, "Won't you step in?"

Leigh Norwell did not wait to be asked twice. They all stepped in at the window and Kathleen told the story of how they had found it and what a difference it made in their Den.

"It was so dark before that we couldn't see to study; now we have all the light we need just by opening the shutter, and when we don't want anybody to know that we have a secret window, we close the shutter and drop the curtain inside, so that it looks like a drapery over a wardrobe or something."

Leigh nodded with a laugh. "A secret window might be handy in some cases. If I had known you were up here I could have spoken to you from the deck of the *Sandpiper*, couldn't I?"

"Oh," cried Kathleen with sparkling eyes, "you did speak to us — with your violin. We sat right here and heard you play, and it was such a treat for us and such luck because we —"

She stopped in confusion and Blake, seeing she had gone so far, bluntly finished the sentence. "We couldn't afford to buy tickets for the concert."

Leigh Norwell did not look nearly so shocked as Ella Glidden had looked at this confession. In fact there was a new interest in his friendly glance at them.

"I'm glad I played, then. I didn't think anybody would notice the sound in here behind all these empty warehouses. But Mother said I'd better not do it again, because, seeing I was to play at the high school concert so soon, it wouldn't be right to give the folks in the street a chance to hear my program beforehand."

"Lucky you didn't," laughed Blake, "unless you want the whole town swarming over here to look at you. If they knew you were here it would be in the morning paper tomorrow and Ella Glidden wouldn't rest a minute till she had been all over your houseboat so that she could tell people she had done it."

Leigh looked very much startled. "Ella Glidden? Why, that's the girl who wrote to ask me to come and play at Broad River. Her letter sounded as if she was used to getting what she wanted. Say, I'd better take the *Sandpiper* off up river before any of these funny things you mention begin happening."

He had turned to step through the secret window when he saw Kathleen looking at him so wistfully that he

stopped short. He seemed to guess what she was thinking of.

"See here, would you like me to bring up my violin and play to you right now? I don't believe anybody could hear us in this room with the window shut. It's away back from the street."

They were so plainly overjoyed at this offer that Leigh lost no time in bringing his violin from the houseboat. Then he sat down and played softly while they listened with rapt faces, only thinking what a pity it was that Jean was not here.

They had closed the shutter of the secret window but they had quite forgotten that other window at the end of the room. It opened into a dark alley which led out to the street between the wall of this building and the next one.

There came a swift patter of feet in the passage and Jean, very bright-eyed and wondering, flung open the door. Leigh Norwell stopped playing to nod and smile at the little girl.

"Oh," gasped Jean, "it's you! I knew it couldn't be anybody else and Ella Glidden said so too. We heard you from the alley. She has gone to find Harvey and they're coming right up."

"Up here?" Blake looked aghast. "Well, they might wait till they're invited!"

Leigh Norwell had jumped to his feet and tucked his violin under his arm. "Come on," he cried, "here's where your secret window helps us out. If you come with me you won't have to answer any awkward questions about where I am."

Taking Jean with them, they went out of the window as nimbly as four squirrels. They let the drapery fall behind them and when they were outside they closed the sash and swung the heavy shutter into place. They had heard Harvey and Ella enter the deserted room while they were still at work. But they moved as quietly as they could down the stairs. Leigh had left his little gangplank in place and in a twinkling the four runaways had skipped on board the *Sandpiper*. The lady in the blue dress rose to greet them while Leigh with a hasty word of introduction, dived below in search of the engineer.

In three minutes the houseboat was slipping out of sight around a curve in the bank while the Wynns watched breathlessly to see if any sign came from the hidden window. Of course it was possible that Ella's sharp eyes would discover it. They could picture her standing in that deserted room staring about at all the changes they had made since she was there. But evidently the secret window told no tales.

As the houseboat glided up river, Jean explained how it happened that she and Ella had heard the music.

"She came up with me out on Dunn Street and walked along with me. Before I thought, I told her that the *Sandpiper* had been in there behind the buildings

right back of our rooms. I was sorry I mentioned it when I saw how she pricked up her ears. But of course I didn't know the *Sandpiper* had come back. Then we passed the end of the alley and we could hear the music coming right down from above. I knew it came from our rooms and Ella knew it too. There was only one person around here who could play like that."

Leigh arose to make a grand bow. "Thank you! So Miss Ella rushed off after her brother and you rushed upstairs just in time to help us get away? Well, the *Sandpiper* will have to find another hiding-place, but first we'll have a bit of a cruise up your splendid big river."

(To be continued)



### Flying Kites!

By POLLY PERKINS

Flying up in the air so high,  
Almost touching the blue of the sky,  
My, how she tussles and pulls on the string,  
Trying to break away, soaring on wings.

Sad is the thought when I grow to a man,  
That I can never fly kites again,  
But in the country of China they say,  
You can see grown men fly kites any day.

Father said he wished that he could live there,  
Thought that kite-flying might help his gray hair,  
Then we pretended we would both go there soon,  
And Father and I could fly kites to the moon.



WE had driven up to the sheep ranch just before sunset. The long trip over rough roads, through the foothills, induced us to accept, without the least hesitation, an invitation to spend the night at the mountain home. It was a typical Western ranch of the kind — a small house with a lean-to for the family, bunk houses for the herders, and sheds and stables for the sheep, cattle and horses, including kennels for the collies, and, in the background, sheep were bleating everywhere.

The elderly man and wife looked too old to be the parents of the two children, a boy of about twelve and a girl of perhaps seven who were playing with some lambs in a side-corral, but this was all proudly explained when the head-herder shouted: "Feeding time!"

The boy and girl ran out to the cow-stalls and soon returned to the waiting lambs with a pan of milk. Then the excitement began. Seven little lambs, wabbling and bleating, surrounded the children, tumbling all over themselves, and fighting in their feeble way, for first place at the feast.

The boy finally squatted down, holding the pan of milk on his knees with one hand, while he guarded it and guided the eager noses of the hungry little horde with the other. As soon as the little feeders began to get in touch with their meal they quieted down and lunged forward with all of the energy they possessed and filled their stomachs. The little girl sat nearby and helped when she could, and the girl and boy seemed to en-

## Orphans

By Paul DeLaney



joy the feast as much as the partakers of it did.

"That is real happiness!" suggested a member of our party to the rancher. "Where are the mothers of the little flock?"

"Dead — coyotes got them!" was the reply. "And they are all orphans," he continued. "The boy and girl, God bless them, are orphans, too, and they are so good — and they seem to have the charity spirit born in them!"

Then he told of how he and his wife in their old age, in the absence of children of their own, had adopted the boy from a state institution, and later, in order that he might have a playmate, adopted the girl.

"And we love them better than some parents seem to love their own children!" joined the aged ranch-wife.

And the truth of this was very evident, for during our stay at the ranch-house, we never saw children mothered and fathered more kindly, and the youngsters were all sunshine and happiness combined.

March he has found his voice and his concerts do not stop until far into the Fall of the year. We are glad to know Robin Redbreast.

Sometime during the month comes a bird of the meadows, dressed in bright yellow and brown, — the Meadow Lark. His wild, sweet song, a clear penetrating whistle, heard from the distant meadow, leaves an impression on the hearer's mind that is never wholly forgotten. "I see you," he says. "You can't see me." And often this is quite true. Hidden in last year's grasses or in some tall tree, it is difficult to locate him. This bird is of great value to the farmer. He feeds almost entirely on insects and obnoxious weeds.

The Phoebe is a March bird, too. He is a Flycatcher and, as his name indicates, catches his food on the wing. Just watch him sit on a branch so quietly that you would think he was asleep, and all of a sudden dart out into the air, tumbling almost upsidedown, catch his prey and return to the same perch! He is an acrobat worth watching, and he is a worker, too. Hour after hour he is on the job, and many are the flying insects which he devours and feeds to his little family. He is dull olive green above, with a blackish head. When sitting, this bird often moves his tail up and down. This characteristic will help you to identify him.

The redwing blackbird appears in March and his "O-ka-lee" is as much a part of the early spring as any song of the March birds. Bog-holes and swamps attract these birds which appear in flocks, the males brilliant in their epaulets of red and orange. The redwing breeds in the swampy lands, but likes the open fields where much of its food is found. He follows the farmer's plow, and picks up grubs, and worms, and caterpillars. Cankerworms are a favorite food, and gypsy-moth caterpillars. He, too, is of great value in the economic life of the world.

Now, boys and girls of *The Beacon*, spend some of your leisure hours this month in the great-out-of-doors. Keep your eyes open to God's wonders awaiting you on every hand. Watch for the returning birds, note their colors and their habits, listen to their music, and care for them and protect them in every way possible. The earth is full of Beauty, and it all belongs to you to enjoy!

## Birds of March

By M. Louise C. Hastings

TO the bird lover, Spring began last month when that inexplicable breath of February air whispered to the expectant heart that the northern migration was underway. When March really appears and we know that, according to the almanac, Spring will open her doors toward the last of the month, there comes a thrill that only those who care for nature will understand.

The Bluebird is usually the first bird to be heard in the early days of March winds and snow flurries which sometimes turn into real blizzards. Nothing daunted, this brave little bird appears regularly around the tenth of this month, and his gentle voice is heard high up in the

air saying in his tender way, "Bermuda! Bermuda!" What a picture he makes among the bare trees! He wears the national colors, red, white and blue, and how they stand out these cool days against the bleakness of the landscape! No matter how hard the winter has been, no matter what sadness has come into our lives, let the bluebird be seen and heard in these early days of March and we are revived, lifted closer to the Great Unseen, purified in some beautiful way which we do not quite understand. Birds are messengers of God, bringing us into touch with all that is best and beautiful!

Another harbinger of spring is the Robin. Everybody knows this bird! He is called our "Cheer-up Bird," and surely when he begins to sing he fulfills his possibilities. For a time Robin is quiet after he returns to us, but by the last of

## Spring!

By MARLIVE STETSON

Cold gray days

And a year grown old,  
Then a bluebird's warble  
And a robin's scold.

Bare trees budding,  
Snowdrops dear,  
Hylas singing, —  
Joy! Spring is here!



# THE BEACON CLUB

## The Editor's Post Box

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

NORWELL, MASS.

Dear Beacon Club Editor: I would like to belong to the Beacon Club. I go to the Unitarian Church and Sunday school. Mr. Barnard is our superintendent. My Sunday-school teacher's name is Mrs. Porter. Our minister's name is Mr. Wilson. I am eleven years old and would like someone of my age to write to me. I read *The Beacon* every Sunday. I always look at the letters of the Beacon Club. I am in the seventh grade at school.

Yours sincerely,  
ELEANOR WADSWORTH.

59 CONCORD ST.,  
PETERBOROUGH, N. H.

Dear Editor: I would like to join the Beacon Club. I go to the Unitarian Church. My Sunday-school teacher's name is Miss Parkhurst and our minister's name is Rev. R. J. Raible. I was ten years old Christmas Day and am in the fourth grade. I would like someone of my age to correspond with me.

Sincerely yours,  
CHRISTY STACY.

## An Everyday Heroine

By EVA EVANS (AGE 14)

### Part II

Seeing her father farther down the street, Barbie ran after him to ask the cause of the confusion. "Ah, haven't you heard? The Town Bank has been robbed by a lone bandit." "What did he look like? Where did he go? Where is he?" were her next questions.

"Don't look so frightened; he's gone, but nobody knows where," Mr. Lawrence answered her kindly.

"Oh, but, Daddy dear, wouldn't you just love to see him, — a real honest-to-goodness bandit?" cried Barbie.

"I don't know as I'd enjoy meeting him, but you asked me to describe him; so I will, and if you happen to meet him on your way home you'll know it's time to run. I asked the cashier, whom he held up, about his looks. He has a small, close-cut beard and small black eyes; he has on a blue shirt, a red tie, and looks as if he were of Jewish descent."

After the excitement had quieted down and searching parties had been sent out, Barbie started for home the shortest route, past the haunted church. As she neared the church she noticed a light

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

50 BANCROFT PARK,  
HOPEDALE, MASS.

Dear Editor: I am twelve years old. I go to the Unitarian Church. My teacher's name is Miss Rogers; Mr. Tegarden is my minister and Mr. Marso is the superintendent. I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and like it very much. I would like to have girls of my age in other States write to me.

Yours truly,  
ELEANOR CONGDON.

Robert Congdon, ten years old, and Marion, nearly nine, are also joining our Club.

35 ALBANY ST.,  
WOLLASTON, MASS.

Dear Editor: I would like very much to join the Beacon Club and wear its pin. I am eight years old and in the fourth grade. I go to the Wollaston Unitarian Church. My teacher's name is Miss Barnard and my minister's name is Rev. Samuel Dunham. I would like some member of my age to write to me.

Sincerely,  
MARTHA COLLINS.

## Puzzlers

### An Acrostic

The words of which definitions are given are all of five letters. When rightly guessed and placed one below another, the initials will spell the name of a much-loved paper.

Definitions:

1. An attendant upon a lord in early English days.
2. A water bird.
3. A small live coal.
4. An adjective meaning soft or soothing.
5. A passage.
6. Fruit of the oak tree.
7. A piece of furniture.
8. Something that brings tears.
9. One who follows in the steps of Florence Nightingale.

M. L. C. H.

### Printer's Pi

Hte uns si gribth, hte ira si arecl,  
Eth gartdin wolslaws oars dan irah,  
Dan morf het tatseyl lems I erah  
Hte lbeddrib royhespping prings.

H. W. L.

### A Charade

My first "is mightier than the sword"  
Though a valiant hand doth hold.  
My second must be crossed each time  
One comes in from the cold.  
My whole's a valiant little fool  
Much used by young and old.

—Scattered Seeds.

### Answers to Puzzles in No. 23

Flower Puzzle. — Violet. 1. Toil. 2. Tile. 3. Veil. 4. Tie. 5. Lot. 6. Vote. 7. Voile. 8. Io. 9. Love. 10. Lie. 11. Toe. 12. To. 13. Live.

Twisted Countries of South America. —

1. Venezuela. 2. Columbia. 3. Argentina. 4. Brazil. 5. Uruguay.

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flicker through one of the panes of a broken basement window. Barbie wondered who was in the church during such excitement and, curiosity getting the better of her fear, she turned her steps toward the broken window, cautiously, but with courage.

Barbie drew near, crouched low to the ground, and peered through the small window. Her heart skipped a beat and she pressed her fingers to her lips to suppress a cry of surprise. There in the dimly-lighted churchroom, lit by a half-burned candle, was a bed, a box, a small safe, and a table around which were grouped four men, among them the mysterious proprietor of the Antique Shoppe carefully dividing the thrifty savings of the Oakenridge people, murmuring words to himself which the dumfounded Barbie caught as she leaned closer. "One for you, one for me, one for you — one, two, three, four, one, two —" "Hurry up and open de oder bag of silver, Abe, we ain't out of dis here burg yet," came from a tough-looking character at the other end of the table.

Quick-witted Barbie jumped to her feet and fairly flew down the hill, her thoughts all jumbled together with the realization of what it meant.

(To be continued)